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Enrollment applications now available for accelerated program to prepare Veterans for high-demand careers

WASHINGTON ? As part of the American Rescue Plan, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs is accepting applications from Veterans interested in the Veteran Rapid Retraining Assistance Program.

VRRAP gives eligible Veterans who lost their job due to the COVID-19 pandemic access to employment reeducation to qualify for high-demand occupations.

“Through efforts like the Veteran Rapid Retraining Assistance Program, VA is investing in Veterans so they can help grow a vibrant, resilient and equitable economy,” said VA Secretary Denis McDonough. “The high-demand occupations identified by VA in partnership with the Department of Labor, include health care, education, media, engineering and high-tech opportunities.”

“With so many Veterans facing unemployment as a result of the pandemic, we worked hard to ensure the latest COVID-19 relief package included the best possible tools to get Veterans and their families through this economic crisis,” said Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committee Chairman Jon Tester (D-Mont.). “The VA Rapid Retraining Assistance Program will cover the costs of training to get more Veterans into high-demand jobs to provide for themselves and their families. I look forward to working with VA to get more Veterans enrolled in this critical program and quickly back on their feet.”

“As we begin to see the end of this pandemic on the horizon, there are still too many veterans reeling from the economic impacts of this past year,” said House Veterans’ Affairs Committee Chairman Mark Takano (D-Calif). “Thanks to President Biden’s American Rescue Plan, help is finally on the way for veterans who lost their jobs as a result of the pandemic. After a tough year, this rapid retraining assistance will help our veterans get back to work, and I encourage all eligible veterans to enroll in this critical program as soon as possible.”

Veterans participating in VRRAP will receive up to 12 months of tuition and fees and a monthly housing allowance based on Post-9/11 GI Bill rates. A Veteran must meet the following criteria for eligibility:

- Be at least 22 years old but not more than 66 years old.
- Be unemployed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Not be eligible for GI Bill or Veteran Readiness and Employment benefits.
- Not be enrolled in a federal or state jobs program.
- Not be receiving VA disability compensation because you are unable to work.
- Not be receiving unemployment compensation, including any enhanced benefits under the CARES Act.

The VRRAP webpage provides information about participating educational institutions and more.

VRRAP was enacted March 11 and is part of the American Rescue Plan, a $1.9 trillion economic stimulus package, with aid targeted to assist individuals and businesses recover from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The program ends 21 months after enactment and is limited to a maximum of 17,250 participants and up to $386 million.

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